

California Department of Education

**Early Literacy Support Block Grant Program
Annual Progress Report Template**

The Early Literacy Support Block (ELSB) Grant program Annual Progress Report allows for participating districts and eligible schools to determine and describe the effectiveness in addressing the required components of the ELSB Grant planning process. **The Annual Report for Year 1 (Planning Year) is due to the California Department of Education on July 30, 2021.** Please complete the following information and email the completed report to ELSBGrant@cde.ca.gov.

Name of District and Eligible Participating School(s): Joshua Elementary School

Report Submitted By (Name/Title): Dr. Jordan Goines

Phone/Email: 661-948-4661

Period Covered: April 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021

Date Submitted: _____

1. Account for the ELSB grant program planning activities that identify both individual and collective contributions in the conducting of a Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment.
 - a. Describe the process and timeline of activities conducted in the development of the Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment
 - b. Specify the local educational agency (LEA) ELSB lead and primary fiscal contact staff.
 - c. Include the names of participants for each participating school and participant roles

LEA: Lancaster School District
ELSB Lead: Dr. Jordan Goines
Fiscal Contact: Ruby Thompson

The following elements were in place to provide for a structured plan for literacy for Joshua Elementary School. During the planning year, the literacy team at Joshua Elementary attended trainings from the Lead Literacy Agency (Sacramento County Office of Education). The team was provided with deep training and guided through a root cause analysis alongside partners from PIVOT learning. While completing the training, the Literacy Team from Joshua Elementary School began the process of conducting a root cause analysis, first in identifying the problem of practice as it results back to the notion of early literacy at the school. In order to secure and accurate root cause the site team conducted a thorough review of data, in which they needed to complete an early literacy assessment, they utilized the Dibels Inventory as their guide in terms of early literacy. They then continued to review data from their iReady reading diagnostic assessment as it related to early literacy, and further, as well as conducting surveys of all stakeholder, i.e. families, and staff. After a thorough analysis of the data, it was determined that there were various significant gaps in the following areas: (1) Phonological Awareness; (2) Letter knowledge; (3) Decoding; (4) High frequency word recognition; (5) Language comprehension; (6) Vocabulary knowledge; (7) Comprehension; (8) Presence of a systemic assessment system; (9) and finally a challenging school culture focused around literacy.

The timeline associated with this process was the following:

Root Cause Analysis was conducted from January – April of 2021. During this time period, the team went through professional development to identify best practices in literacy, information regarding Scarborough's Rope, and finally how to effectively conduct a root cause analysis.

Stakeholder Engagement was a significant component of our root cause analysis, and was conducted at various meetings by the Principal from February through April of 2021. The following methods of stakeholder engagement were undertaken: Staff meetings, School Site Council, Instructional Leadership Team meetings, through early literacy surveys, grade level meetings, written correspondence, and final through our annual Youth Truth survey, and a literacy survey.

The Needs Assessment was conducted in conjunction with the Root Cause Analysis, however extended from January 2021 – May 2021 in order to ensure that the site was working on the problem that would provide the most impact to enhancing early literacy.

Members of the Joshua Literacy Team:

Early Literacy Team Member	Role (Include title and/or grade level)
Andrea Williams	Instructional Coach
Melissa Marino	Resource Specialist
Jessica Kern	K Teacher
Kiara McCoy	K Teacher
Jennie Johnson	1 Teacher
Josh Hagle	2 Teacher
Cynthia Hurst	3 Teacher
Krista Thompson	CIA Director
Jordan Goines	Special Programs Director
Becky Wetzel	Consultant

2. Validate the results of the Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment.

- a. Specify the findings from the examination of both school-level and LEA-level practices or unmet needs, including those relating to school climate, social-emotional learning, and the experience of under-performing pupils and their families, that have contributed to low pupil outcomes for pupils in grade three on the consortium summative assessment in English Language Arts.

It was determined that teachers do not have a cohesive and thorough knowledge of standards, curriculum, and materials in order to effectively provide meaningful instruction in . Current teacher understanding of the standards, curriculum, and materials does not drill down to the science of reading, leading to too few students being able to read and comprehend grade level text by the third grade. The Curriculum is vast and difficult to teach in its entirety. Teachers do not have the understanding of the standards or the science of reading to be able to choose the key elements out of the curriculum to maintain the appropriate scope and sequence.

It was also determined that inconsistency in conjunction with unclear expectations and systems are impacting our teachers' ability to provide clear and effective literacy instruction. Teacher's do not understand how to effectively organize and implement daily and weekly schedules for reading instruction. Literacy instruction, routines and practices are not consistent across the grade levels or the school as a whole. Utilizing the Note catchers in the PIVOT Grant Sessions, the leadership team was able to make the following determination. The team determined that there is not a consistent expectation or understanding of how to utilize assessment data to inform instruction and then generalize into action.

Many teachers at Joshua do not understand the science of how to teach reading. It is evident that literacy instruction is inconsistent and not focused on standards. In particular, there is a major gap in the Word Recognition and vocabulary knowledge components of Scarborough's Rope. The team determined that there were gaps in many areas of Scarborough's rope, however these were the two areas of most immediate need to increase student achievement. The team also determined that the teaching staff does not fully understand Scarborough's rope and therefore do not have a consistent approach to teaching reading using this theory. There are large overall gaps in teacher knowledge of how to effectively teach reading.

There is not a consistent school wide literacy assessment system that encompasses all strands of Scarborough's Rope. There is currently a large number of options of assessments that teachers are picking and choosing from that do not meet the needs of our students. Furthermore, the frequency of assessments used are not consistent within or across grade levels. Teaching staff does not know how to use assessment data to then inform instruction.

The team identified the following domains as specific Literacy Areas for Consideration. First it was determined that there is a high need to develop our students' reading ability levels within the domain of Word Recognition. The specific subdomains within this domain to be considered are phonological awareness, letter knowledge, decoding and encoding, and sight recognition of both high frequency and irregularly spelled words.

Phonological Awareness

Students at Joshua are not mastering Phonological Awareness and it is not being consistently and purposefully assessed. The site has not been using a Phonological Awareness Assessment. Teachers have been utilizing Heggerty to teach Phonological Awareness, however, the assessment and instructional components are not being incorporated with fidelity. There is a need for rich and consistent instruction and assessment in the area of Phonological Awareness.

Letter Knowledge

The gap in Letter Knowledge was a determination made based on a needs analysis assessment battery. Students at Joshua are not mastering letter knowledge as evidenced by the fact that 57% (17/30) of Kindergarten students tested using the Illuminate Letter Name Test were not at or above the benchmark of 42 letter names. Letter knowledge instruction is being done with inconsistent teaching materials and routines. Grades 1-5 do not have a system for addressing knowledge gaps in this area as well. There is a need for consistent and cohesive instruction of letter knowledge and a matching assessment system.

Decoding/Encoding

Students at Joshua have also not mastered the subdomain of Decoding and Encoding as evidenced by assessment results. In 3rd grade, 80% of students tested using the Dibels 8th Edition Nonsense Word Fluency did not meet the Dibels *midyear* benchmark of 30 Words Read Correctly. In 1st grade, 74% of students tested using the Nonsense Word Fluency did not meet the Dibels *midyear* benchmark of 14 words read correctly. In 2nd grade, 93% of students tested using the Nonsense Word Fluency did not meet the Dibels *midyear* benchmark of 68 Correct Letter Sounds. The site has been utilizing BPST assessments to determine students' ability levels. This assessment is not a deep and thorough assessment that drills down to illuminate the gaps in students' knowledge. Additionally, teachers do not know how to use assessment results to inform future instruction. The site's instruction and assessment has only addressed decoding. The site has not yet begun to specifically address the instruction and assessment of encoding. There is a need for decoding and encoding instruction and assessment at the site.

High Frequency Word Recognition

Joshua students are also not mastering the subdomain of high frequency word recognition based on assessment data from the needs analysis. In 3rd grade, 79% of students tested using the Word Reading Fluency did not meet the Dibels *midyear* benchmark of 50 Words Read per Minute. In 2nd grade, 75% of students tested using the Word Reading Fluency did not meet the Dibels *midyear* benchmark of 36 Words Read Per Minute. This is also evidenced in Kindergarten, with 93% (26/28) of students tested using the Illuminate Grade Level Word Test were below benchmark (level 3) of 32 words read correctly. Teachers are not using an agreed upon list of High Frequency Words. Currently five different lists are being utilized across campus without fidelity. i-Ready has been used as the assessment tool for High Frequency Words. However, because different word lists are being taught, the assessment is not an accurate representation of teaching and learning. The team lacks a

deep understanding of the scientific basis of this subdomain, including why and how to teach it. The site needs a consistent list of High Frequency Words and a system for assessing students' mastery of those words.

Language Comprehension

In addition to Word Recognition, Language Comprehension was identified as a domain that must be considered. The specific subdomains for consideration are background knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge. The site does not specifically assess in each of these subdomains. However, Current 1st grade students were assessed twice during the school year for speech and language concerns in Kindergarten, during the 2019/2020 school year. In Kindergarten, 50% (54/108) of the students assessed (108) passed the language screening at that time. The site has attempted to address some of these areas, such as academic vocabulary, however these attempts have not been implemented with fidelity and therefore, the school lacks a cohesive instructional plan for the components of Language Comprehension.

Vocabulary Knowledge

Students at the site display Vocabulary Knowledge deficits. In Kindergarten, 31% of students tested using the i-Ready mid-year diagnostic scored one or more grade levels below benchmark in the vocabulary domain. In grade 1, 76% of students tested using the i-Ready mid-year diagnostic scored one or more grade levels below benchmark in the vocabulary domain. In grade 2, 78% of students tested using the i-Ready mid-year diagnostic scored one or more grade levels below benchmark in the vocabulary domain. In grade 3, 73% of students tested using the i-Ready mid-year diagnostic scored one or more grade levels below benchmark in the vocabulary domain. There is not an agreed upon approach of incorporating vocabulary knowledge and instruction into the curriculum. There is also not an agreed upon common list of vocabulary words for instruction. There is also not an agreement regarding whether vocabulary should be academic vocabulary or content based. Additionally, the i-Ready assessment tool does not align with the English Language Arts curriculum currently in use at the site. This lack of vocabulary knowledge and instruction is impacting students' ability to appropriately access higher level curriculum.

Comprehension

Comprehension was determined to be the final domain that must be considered. The specific subdomains for consideration include the different types and purposes of texts, maximizing student learning through targeted text selection and the fluency of student reading, including accuracy, rate/automaticity and prosody. The site does not specifically teach and assess types and purposes of texts or reading fluency with consistency. For this reason, there is no data to reflect our students' current ability levels in these specific subdomains. Currently the site assesses reading comprehension through the i-Ready diagnostic assessments.

Assessment System

The site lacks a cohesive, consistent assessment system in the K-3rd grade classes. Some teachers administer the BPST assessment. However, the administration is not done consistently, the resulting data is not consistently used to inform instruction, and the process is not consistent within or across grade levels. Teachers therefore have limited knowledge of

where students are at in their learning and have a more difficult time addressing learning gaps. The site needs a consistent and cohesive assessment program in K-3.

School Culture

The site does not have a culture of reading. Students do not own their learning and progress in reading. Students do not yet see the connection between their reading skills and other academic areas as well as life outside of school. Many families are not able to support students in their growth as readers

3. Describe the identified strengths and weaknesses of both the eligible school(s) and the LEA regarding literacy instruction in transitional kindergarten through grade 3 (TK –3), inclusive. Identify all relevant diagnostic measures, including, but not limited to, pupil performance data, data on effective and ineffective practices, and equity and performance gaps reviewed during the Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment.

Strengths:

- Curriculum program and materials to support explicit instruction.
- Recognition for the needs that are required to provide for a quality early literacy program for both the site and the district level.
- Use of Heggerty

- Everyone at the site is in the same place in terms of knowledge base pertaining to early literacy instruction.
- Teachers go above and beyond when attempting to teach literacy at the early grades, and various methods.
- All TK-3 use the BPST.
- School culture has increased over the past three years. Positive perception on culture has gone from 17% to 45% at Joshua Elementary based on the school annual YouthTruth Survey.
- Joshua Elementary does have an understanding of the materials needed to develop early readers.

Weaknesses:

- Having a consistent assessment for early literacy.
- Lack of a system for providing early literacy instruction.
- There is an inclination to provide instructional programs in parts, and not with fidelity.
- Consistency in instruction in various areas i.e. Decoding/Encoding, Letter Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Sight Word Recognition, and in assessments.
- Based on assessment data, it was observed that a majority of students fall behind in phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, decoding/encoding, and work with sight words.
- The district is in need of a system for training teachers in a cohesive system for teaching literacy.

4. Explain how the LEA consulted with stakeholders, including school staff, school leaders, parents, and community members, at each eligible school about the Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment and proposed expenditures of the grant funds. If the School Site Council (SSC) was used for this purpose, describe how the school provided public notice of meetings and how meetings were conducted in the manner required by Section 35147 of the *Education Code*.

Staff stakeholders were consulted and informed on the ELSB information during Staff Meetings and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings, and Grade Level meetings. Community stakeholders were informed on how to better provide literacy instruction during our work with the school's various stakeholder groups. Those stakeholder groups were: The African American Advisory Committee (AAAC), the School Site Council (SSC), and the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC).

Community was also consulted utilizing various stakeholder survey's such as our YouthTruth survey, Literacy Survey's, and the ELSB Survey.

Administrators for the site helped to lead the planning team, and the Superintendents Cabinet was consulted during a cabinet meeting regarding further actions, and possibilities towards spending funding. District office Administrators were present at all meetings with the Literacy Team.

5. Justify LEA partnerships with literacy experts from the county office of education for the county in which the LEA is located, a geographic lead agency established, or the Expert Lead in Literacy in the development of the Root Cause Analysis and Needs Assessment and the Literacy Action Plan. If applicable, describe any partnership with a member of an institution of higher education or nonprofit organization with expertise in literacy for this purpose, which may also involve experts in participatory design and meaningful community involvement.

The LEA partnered with the Sacramento County Office of Education in order to receive services regarding root cause analysis, and needs assessment, as well as information pertaining to early literacy instruction. This has provided the district and the school site with access to an understanding of the requirements of a quality Root Cause Analysis, and Needs Assessment, as well as an understanding of how to complete a quality Literacy Action Plan. We were able to complete that action plan with the assistance of the Lead Agency.

The district partnered with an outside service provider, Bridges to Excellence, to allow for consistent guidance during meetings with the Literacy team. While assisting with the writing of the Literacy Action Plan.

6. Describe how enrollment, program participation, and stakeholder engagement were leveraged to address the literacy needs of students enrolled in grades TK–3 at participating eligible schools, and include a brief narrative of analytical findings (see chart on page 8).

Joshua Elementary School has leveraged program participation in order to address literacy needs of students enrolled in grades TK-3 by targeting all efforts of existing programs at the site to focus on literacy through the use of literacy strategies. This will allow the site to maintain a consistent focus of literacy in TK-3. This has been communicated to stakeholders, such as the AAAC, ELAC, Joshua's School Site Council, and Parenting Partners groups. These groups, have held discussions on how to assist their students within the home with regards to literacy, and to further promote literacy within the community and were instrumental in providing for actions to leverage reading achievement by increasing access to high level culturally relevant reading in the home. Much of this was driven by our student enrollment and demographic, which provided the need to increase access to culturally relevant reading material in the home.

NOTE: Use the chart below to identify the anticipated number of students enrolled who will be served by ELSB Grant-funded activities and the **primary** stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents, community members, etc.) who were active participants in the Root Cause Analysis, Needs Assessment, and development of the three-year Literacy Action Plan.

Description	Student Enrollment (List only the number for each grade level, TK–3, by eligible participating school)	Participating Teachers (List only the number for each grade level, TK–3, by eligible participating school)	Participating Administrator(s) (List only role and number of each by district office and eligible participating school.)	Other Stakeholder Input (List all participating stakeholder groups by eligible participating school. For example, SSC, English Learner Advisory Committee [ELAC], school board, etc., and the number of participants for each.
	Joshua Elementary TK = 15 K = 60 1 = 92 2 = 101 3 = 101	Joshua Elementary TK = 1 K = 2 1 = 3 2 = 3 3 = 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District ELA Curriculum Director = 1 • District Director of Special Programs = 1 • Mozart Admin = 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC (10), ELAC (5), DELAC (11), AAAC (6) • Literacy Survey – 31 • Teachers – 25 • YouthTruth Survey - 103
Numbers	<i>Joshua = 369</i>	<i>Joshua = 12</i>	<i>Joshua = 4</i>	<i>Joshua stakeholder (zoom meetings) – 32</i> <i>Joshua with stakeholder input via survey - 159</i>